

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the above-identified application:

Claims 1-31 (canceled).

Claim 32 (currently amended): A method of producing a gas comprising:
forming a single grain assembly from a plurality of individual solid propellant grains, the plurality of individual solid propellant grains each having two ends, an inner surface extending between the two ends, an outer surface extending between the two ends, and two side surfaces extending between the two ends, and the plurality of individual solid propellant grains each arranged so that at least two of the individual solid propellant grains are shaped and oriented in such a way that they are symmetrical with respect to each other about a line; and

selectively igniting the symmetrical individual solid propellant grains in the single grain assembly from at least one of the two ends in such a way that the individual solid propellant grains are consumed from the two ends in a manner that is substantially symmetrical with respect to the line.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The method of claim 32 wherein:
the individual solid propellant grains are arranged in pairs; and
the individual solid propellant grains in each pair are substantially symmetrical with respect to each other.

Claim 34 (previously presented): The method of claim 33 wherein the step of selectively igniting includes the step of igniting the individual solid propellant grains in the solid propellant grain assembly only in pairs.

Claim 35 (previously presented): The method of claim 32 wherein the at least two individual solid propellant grains in the solid propellant grain assembly are selectively ignited simultaneously.

Claim 36 (previously presented): The method of claim 35 wherein the step of igniting the at least two individual solid propellant grains in the solid propellant grain assembly simultaneously includes the step of igniting the at least two individual solid propellant grains in the solid propellant grain assembly simultaneously at the two ends on each grain.

Claim 37 (previously presented): The method of claim 32 wherein:
a pair of the plurality of individual solid propellant grains is arranged differently in at least one of size and shape from the at least two individual solid propellant grains; and
the at least two individual solid propellant grains are ignited before the pair of individual solid propellant grains is selectively ignited.

Claim 38 (previously presented): The method of claim 32 wherein:
the at least two individual solid propellant grains are arranged so that they extend from respective first end portions to respective second end portions; and
the at least two individual solid propellant grains are arranged so as to provide a channel between the first and second end portions of at least one individual solid propellant grain.

Claims 39-42 (canceled).